The Tellurian Artifice



by

Collette Bowyer

The Tellurian Artifice was originally published in a different format in 1901.

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Foreword

Here, published together for the first time in many years, are the nineteen canonical chapters of the *Tellurian Artifice*.

Authored by Collette Bower in the last decade of the nineteenth century, this set of allegories expound on the Gnostic idea that all of humanity is trapped inside the physical universe: the *Gaol that is the World*. Some believe it to be a spiritual guidebook that shows the way to enlightenment. Others use its tenets as a basis for their faith and practices. These *Circlar* sects are as diverse as they are numerous. And yet, the *Tellurian Artifice* as a complete work has remained an elusive and ephemeral text.

History

Born into moderate industrial wealth, Collette Bowyer's life was somewhat tragic. She lost both her second child and then her husband by the time she was 35, and this caused a spiritual shift in her life. She sought out answers through study, and such groups as the Theosophist movement. Finally breaking from these over exposed groups, she is thought to have gone into seclusion, producing in this time the chapters of the *Tellurian Artifice*. It is believed that for the most part Bowyer was recording what she had seen in her dreams, although this myth grew as she aged, and flourished with repetition. Whatever the source of her ideas the booklet was published in 1901, although only a few hundred copies were every reproduced.

Nineteen Chapters

Only the nineteen canonical chapters are presented here in this edition. The two additional text written by Collette Bowyer, The Mountain and The Snake, are not included as these are known to have been written by her after the original publication dates. Some groups purport to have additional chapters of the *Tellurian Artifice* available to them, but investigation has ruled all of these out as belonging to the original.

Symbols

The circular symbols included at the beginning of each chapter were not in the original publication of the Tellurian Artifice. These were supposedly added by members of the *Coterie*, the esoteric group that sprang up around Collette Bower in the early 1900s. The symbols have been subsequently used to identify the aspects of the *Tellurian Artifice* and the *Circlar* belief system. The most notable example is the *Man in the Circle* which has become synonymous with followers of the *Strange Circle.*

Chapter Order

No single version of the booklet has remained intact, and the true order of the chapters has been lost. The chapters are presented here in the following order:

1. The Gaol that is the World
2. The Little Sight
3. Bright Masks

4. Eidolon
5. Man in the Circle
6. The Window
7. The Angel
8. The Demon
9. The Fullness
10. The Divine Spark
11. Wisdom
12. God who is not God
13. The Great Fear
14. The Shadow
15. Many Paths
16. The Shared World
17. The Wall
18. The Stranger
19. The Doorway

This order is based on a historical analysis of the text, chapter content, and writing style. It is thought to be the order in which the chapters were penned by Collette Bowyer.

We include the following thematic scheme. This may help the reader to follow the varying narratives that are strung almost haphazardly throughout the book:

Description of the Circle

1. The Gaol that is the World
2. Man in the Circle
3. The Window
4. The Fullness
5. The Great Fear
6. The Shared World
7. Many Paths

Creatures of the Circle

1. Eidolon
2. The Angel
3. The Demon
4. The Shadow
5. The Stranger

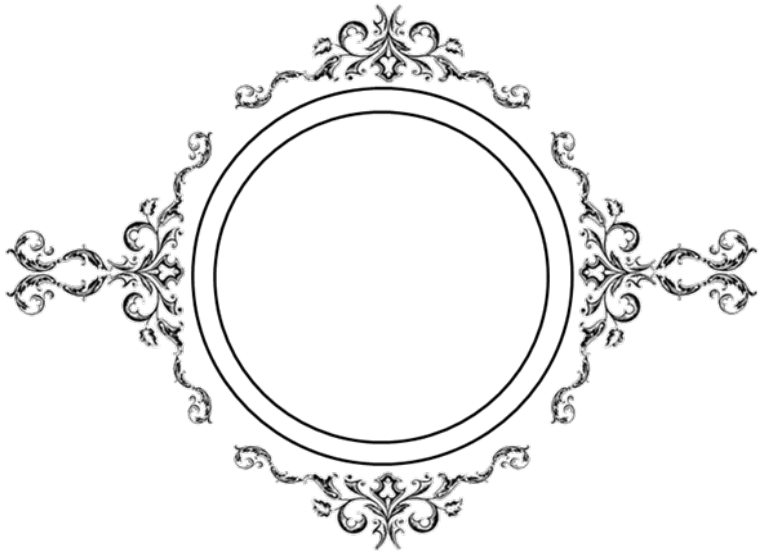
The Path through the Circle

1. The Little Sight
2. Bright Masks
3. The Divine Spark
4. Many Paths
5. The Doorway

The Creation of the Circle

1. Wisdom
2. God who is not God
3. The Divine Spark
4. The Great Fear

The Gaol that is the World



1.

I came to the crest of a hill, beyond which lay a deep valley. Surrounded on all sides by mountains, the vale lay shrouded in the shadow of them. And built in the very depths of that shadow was a gigantic building.

2.

"What is that place?" I asked the Stranger.

"It is the whole World, from whence you came," she answered, and I wondered at her response, for it was a building of immense size. Castle-like, its stolid grey brick walls reminded me in design of the prison at *Newgate.* But they rose upwards for thousands of feet instead of tens, and no windows were there on the outside of this behemoth.

3.

As we watched from our vantage, tiny figures could be seen on the surface of the building. They hung from ladders and wooden scaffolds, they scrambled over the many roofs and some even appeared to fly around the outside of the walls under their own power.

"Who are they?" I asked my guide.

"They are the artificers; the little-makers. They maintain the boundary of the Gaol so that none may escape its confines."

And I looked closely and saw that many of the figures carried tools and were attending to the structure. And the more I examined their appearance, the clearer it became that these were not human beings; some were winged or horned or had some other animal characteristic. Others looked human, but were faceless. Smooth skin was there instead of eyes and nose and mouth, but still they could sense enough to perform their tasks. I shuddered at the sight of all these beings, as they were alien to me.

4.

"Are we to go down there?" I asked the stranger.

No sooner had I spoke these words than we were stood on the valley floor. The Gaol that is the World rose up impossibly in front of me, and I gaped. There was a rough path in the base of the valley and on it we walked, the colossal edifice growing in my sight as we approached it.

"I don't understand," I asked as we walked. "How can you say that this is the whole of the world? In the world I

am largely free to do as I please, and yet you say that it is a gaol."

"You will see," the Stranger replied.

As we drew near the impossibly large wall, I could discern that we were heading for a door. It was meagre compared to the monstrosity it allowed access to; a normal wooden door of normal height. Closer still, and I could see a carving on its surface; one circle inside of another.

5.

As we approached, the simple wooden door swung open. There was no one there to guard the way, or to ask who we were. Indeed, the light that spilt through the door-frame was warm and inviting. Rich smells emanated from the place; the light of a crackling wood fire, and the sounds of a busy kitchen. I was not afraid to enter this gaol. Rather I found myself drawn toward its offerings of familiarity, safety and family.

6.

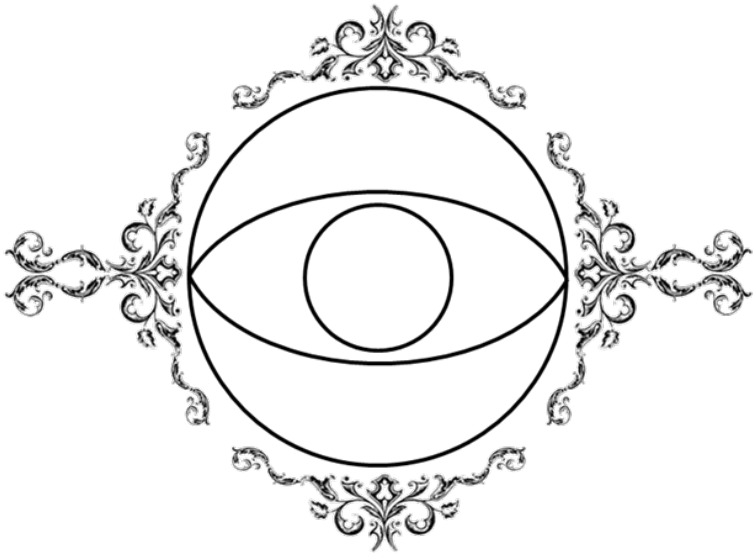
When I took an independent step toward the opening, my companion placed a gentle hand on my arm. "Be ye not so eager to enter this place, for it is a place of subterfuge and lies," she warned.

"But it feels so safe to me," I said her, "It is warm and inviting inside there. But out here, it is a wasteland. I recognise nothing about this place. Even the sky is unfamiliar, and every new thing that you show me is tiresome to behold."

She turned me away from the door then. "You are not ready to go back inside yet, for you have already escaped that place once. Should you re-enter you would forget all that is outside and all that you have learnt. And you would forget me, which would be sinful, as I am that part of you that has always dwelt here."

And I embraced her, for it was true that she was a part of me that I had forgotten.

The Little Sight



1.

There was an itch in the corner of my eye; not a physical pain, but a need to draw my gaze in that direction. And when I paid attention to this need, I began to see the cracks that marred the walls of Gaol; fractures in the illusion that surrounds us all. And not only sights, but sounds as well, and to a lesser extent the other senses. But mainly sight, as our eyes are both the lock and the key to our humanity.

2.

Jesus said, on the Mount... "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

3.

The eye is a mirror. We perceive only what we expect to perceive. If we choose to believe only in the illusion, that is what we will see. If we open our minds to the possibility of the Lie, our eyes will begin to see things for what they really are.

4.

There was an itch in the corner of my eye, and I asked the Stranger for relief.

"You will get no relief from me, or from anyone else," she answered.

"But why does it irritate so?"

She turned me around to face the rest of the World. "You are calling yourself forward to witness the Lie. Your mind has been opened, and now it seeks to make you see the world for what it is. This is the Little Sight."

5.

And when I looked, at first there were only glances of the truth. Flashes of movement and snatches of sound. But I persevered, and instead of dismissing these as a nonsense, I allowed them to become real. And the Little Sight blossomed.

6.

In a crowded street I learnt of a horror. I beheld the masses, the throng of humanity all around me, going about their business oblivious to everything save

themselves. And then I looked again, and the Little Sight showed me that most of them were not true humans. The beings around me wore the masks of humanity, and they outnumbered us tenfold! They became aware that I could see them, and they began to stare back at me. I admit that I ran from that place, and looked no further into the faces of passers-by.

7.

In my darkened bed chamber I beheld the structure of the Lie. I awoke in the dead of night, the clawing miasma of a nightmare still upon my mind. And in that 'tween state I was both in the World and outside it. Awake and yet not awake. As I looked at the walls, the Little Sight came over me, and I perceived faults in their form. These were cracks in the nature of the Lie, and the more I stared, the wider they became. There was a light beyond them that spilled lazily into the room from some other place. Things moved in front of the light, casting hazy shadows on the floor of my room.

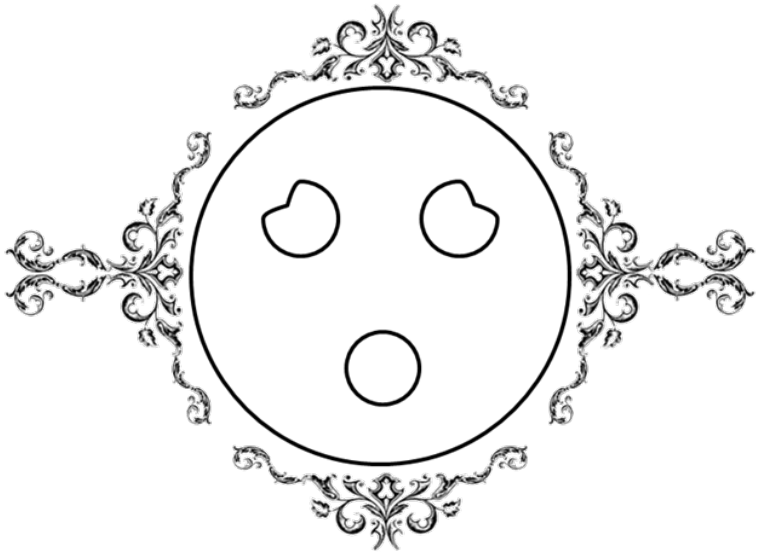
8.

The Little Sight is yours to foster and encourage. But be prepared for the scale of truth that is revealed. Seeing is believing, and even though you ken the theory of a thing, without the sight of it, it is not truly real.

9.

The nature of the Truth is horrifying. You must accept this and see it for what it is.

Bright Masks



1.

Subtle are our gaolers.

Hidden in plain sight, they walk amongst us with impunity wearing bright masks of humanity covering their shadowed cores. The masks cover various beings. Presenting as the people around us, they are nothing but empty husks of life: foils and props existing to maintain the illusion of the World. However, their disguises are well maintained.

It is not often that one of them is caught in their lies.

2.

Behold! There is the man, controlling his wife and children with fear and duty. But as soon as he leaves the house, he ceases to exist!

Behold! There is the woman, with a lash for a tongue, using words to direct and to bind. Her children are scared of her; she arrives at the door to their room and exists

there only in their sight. Her husband is drawn unto the floor by her scolding, and even when she is not apparent, she exists in his head like a cancer.

These empty creations of our gaolers walk about in plain view, talk with us, and interact with us. But they are not human, and have no soul to call their own.

3.

Remember the childhood fantasy that you were the only real person in the world; that everybody else were merely players on a stage, there to populate your life for your benefit.

There is truth in this fancy, albeit a horrifying one.

The number of humans on the Earth is much lower than we are lead to believe.

4.

Other masks hide more insidious beings. Our gaolers themselves, or those acting in their stead, sometimes inhabit our outer circle. Great are the numbers of these demons, and diverse is their nature. Their hierarchy is complex and extensive, and stretches beyond the limits of all enlightened sight. Seldom does one of these interlopers reveal themselves, and their demonic masks are tightly held in front of their true natures.

To see this true nature is to be at its mercy.

5.

The brightest of all the masks is the one most familiar to us. We have created it, moulded it, and we wear it proudly over our own features.

But it is another aspect of the Gaol that is the World.

This mask has been strengthened and hardened by years of living under the Lie. Little by little, as you are opened to the truth, your mask will loosen and break apart, revealing your true nature to those around you.

This can be a wondrous event, or it can lead to persecution and alienation. Invariably the views of an enlightened soul are vastly different to those of the imprisoned masses.

They can, in fact, be a terrifying anathema.

6.

Be careful when your mask slips!

Be careful of those imprisoned souls who would recapture you with their law and dogma.

Be careful of the Gaolers who would bend the illusion into new levels of subterfuge to imprison you once again.

So be careful when your own bright mask is slipping.

You never know who may be watching.

Eidolon



1.

From the outside, the skin of the Gaol was covered in creatures. They travelled freely over its surface, tending the cracks that sometimes appeared. They fixed these with a mortar mixed of will and guile, and they never tired of their work.

These are the Eidola.

2.

The Eidola are many in form and variety. Their intelligence varies as does there true appearance. Some, like the *Irin*, are content to observe the illusion at work until some inner voice commands them to fall one way or the other. These are higher beings as they can choose their appearance and have intelligence beyond our ken.

3.

Some of the Eidola are little more than base creatures. They inhabit the illusion like watch-dogs, seeking out that which threatens the lie. They are multitudinous in design; one could be a mist in the night, whilst another could walk and talk like a man. But always they are revealed by their lack of humanity and a primitive, animal intelligence which limits their motives and sensibilities.

4.

The most damned, the most lost of all the Eidola are those humans who refuse the truth when it is placed before them. They turn away from their first step out of the Gaol, as if it is a leap over an infinitely deep chasm. For some this is a conscious choice; they would rather live in blissful ignorance than face the ultimate horror of opening themselves to the nature of their existence. For others, there is little choice. They unconsciously block the light from their eyes when it shines upon them, as it is too bright for their minds to endure.

5.

Insidious are the servants of the Great Artificer. They whisper into the ears of humanity, cajoling them into acts that strengthen the Lie around them. They promise physical rewards, and there are those humans who are enlightened to the truth, and yet choose material gain over their own spiritual journey. These humans are the Lords of the physical realm, raised on high by unseen hands, but they are only puppets and playthings of our

Gaolers. They choose an eidolonic state, and also choose to further the imprisonment of other humans. They are to be reviled.

6.

Raised amongst the Eidola are the 'Little Makers', second to the Great Artificer himself. They are as skilled in creating the Lie as their Father, and they share his goals and morality. But he has cast them off the leash and they are free to roam the world pursuing their own agendas.

Some seem almost benevolent. They aid humanity, stopping just short of enlightening their slaves. They cultivate the spark within, drawing it forth by using our own emotions against us.

They have been known by many names throughout the ages. They are the Archangels, the Archons. They are demi-Gods and Godesses feeding off the worship of mortal men. In modern times they have become emperors and kings, politicians and generals.

7.

Fear the Eidola in all their forms, for they will enslave you and devour your brilliance.

Man in the Circle



1.

As the mist cleared, I found myself in a dark chamber. Its walls curved around a wide pit in the floor, and I stood on an iron walkway that ran around the circumference of the room. There were no doorways in the grimy brickwork walls, and, for a moment, I panicked as I was unable to see a way to escape this terrible place. Then, a noise drew my attention over the black railing and into the void beyond.

2.

It was a vertical drop of about 30 feet. The floor at the bottom was lined with trenches filled with fire. By the light of these infernal flames a wooden frame was revealed, fixed in the centre of the space. It was circular in shape and hung from the walls by thick chains, pulled taught by the weight of the heavy timber. And in the centre of this hanging circle was a man.

3.

Naked he was, and bound. His feet were lashed to the circle's lowest point, and his hands were stretched above his head and similarly fastened. His head was shorn of hair, and the mutilations of his face were clearly visible.

4.

His ears were filled with red candle wax, so he could hear not.

5.

His mouth was sewed closed with blue thread, so he could speak not.

6.

His eyes were closed, and tightly glued together, so he could see not.

7.

I asked the Stranger, "Who is this man, that is so bound and trapped?"

She answered, "He is both a single human, and the whole of humankind."

I thought about her answer, but I was confused.

She explained: "A human being is trapped inside the confines of his own physical body. His sensation is limited by his own organs, and by the limitation of his teachings. It is as if he is blind and deaf and dumb. Those who are thusly limited experience as much of the truth as

the rest of humankind, but sometimes they perceive more, for the path to freedom often lies deeply within us."

8.

She continued, "He is representative of your species, as all humans are trapped in a similar fashion. The physical world is an illusion designed to ensnare the souls of the divine spark. This is the Gaol that is the World."

9.

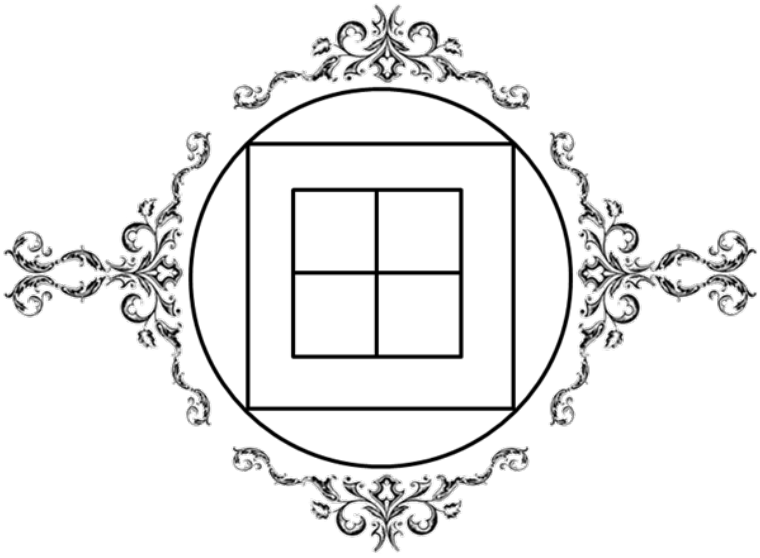
With those words came a change in the scene below us. The bindings on the wrists and ankles of the trapped man became unravelled and fell away to the floor of the chamber. At the same time, the red wax in his ears melted and ran out. The glue on his eyes dried and failed. The cotton binding his lips crumbled to dust.

10.

The free man floated there in the centre of the circle for a moment. He looked up at me with his newly opened eyes, and smiled. Then, he was gone. I turned back to the Stranger, and asked, "What was it that freed him?"

"Nothing," she answered, "His emancipation was of his own choosing."

The Window



1.

And the Wall was revealed to me, and it appeared as a red brick facade stretching away from me into the distance. In its revelation, openings in its surface could be seen; windows of glass that allowed me to look beyond the illusion into the higher truth beyond.

2.

I walked up to the first such window. I placed my hand upon the glass; it felt cold and very real. It allowed me to see beyond the Wall, but allowed no passage. There was a room beyond the window. I could see bare floors and unadorned walls. Rows of wooden chairs lined the place, and there people sat.

3.

"Who are they?" I asked the Stranger.

"They are the forsaken; the lost and the frightened. They have seen the truth behind the Lie that is the World, and it has paralysed them. Here they sit, in Limbo, unable to do anything except wait for death."

One of the women who was sat there looked up at me. Her face was a picture of sorrow, and she stroked her arms as if she were cold. I beckoned her over to me, but she shook her head and turned away.

4.

I shuddered. I wondered why they simply didn't leave that place, until I realised that there was no door. They had escaped one gaol for another, and they lacked the impetus to seek a new way out.

5.

I moved to the next window. It looked onto a long passageway that lead off into the distance. The stone walls were covered in writing; names and symbols, arrows pointing the way, even rudimentary sketches. I seemed to be looking into a dead-end of some underground maze. Further down the way openings lead off to the left and the right. It was an altogether depressing view.

6.

"This is the Skein" the Stranger said, without me having to ask. "It is the part of the illusion that lies just underneath the surface. It is always there, waiting to

ensnare wayward travellers with endless labyrinthine passageways filled with pit-traps and ancient oubliettes."

"And what is its purpose?"

"Most think it is an aspect of the Gaol's construction. It is the knot that binds all the threads of the Lie together. It is that part of the lie which is desperately complex, even ludicrously so, and yet is recurrent in all civilizations. It is the religious fervour that spreads around the world, and the superstition that prevails in spite of it. It is dogma and philosophy, the arrogance of the new Science and the dark tales told around the fire to scare the children."

7.

As she spoke, I watched with rising horror as a shadow presented itself from around one of the passage junctions. It crept forwards towards me with the slyness of a stalking cat, and grew in size as it neared me. I had seen enough of this view, and I pressed the Stranger to move onward.

8.

I hurried on to the third window. A light was streaming through it, casting my shadow in a stark relief; long and black on the surface of the floor. When I looked through the window to the scene beyond, I was filled with great joy and calm.

9.

It was a scene of pastoral beauty unfound in nature; rolling green fields, a blue cloudless sky, and a single enormous oak tree dominating the skyline.

"Is it heaven?" I asked.

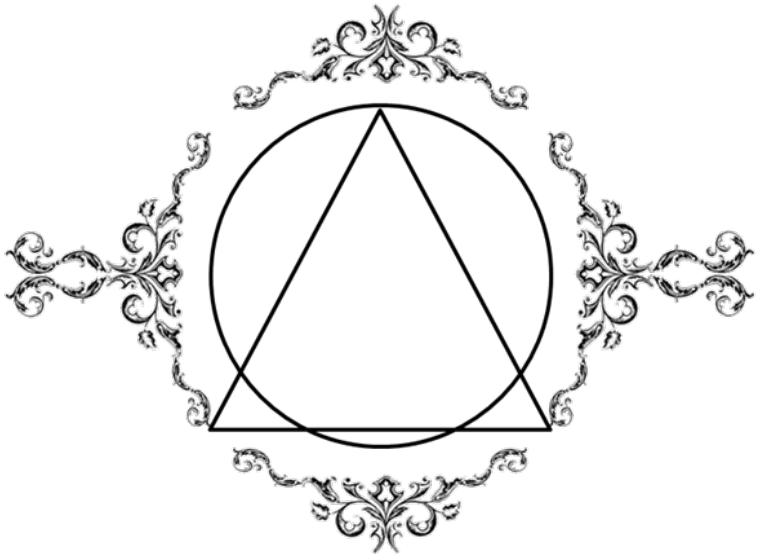
"Perhaps," the Stranger answered, "though that word is burdened by the chains of false ideals. This is the unfettered place; the world free of the lie. It is the dwelling place of those who have escaped the bounds of the Gaol, and can see the face of the illusion, unmasked."

10.

There really was no doubt in my mind, after that.

I wanted to live in this place, and be representative of its inhabitants.

The Angel



1.

I walked along the street and as I looked around me, a truth was revealed. One by one the Stranger pointed out the figures there that were not human. Many of them scurried around, simply pretending to be people. Others intervened in a more direct manner, perched on the shoulders of men and women, whispering into their ears.

2.

High above all of this throng, crouched birdlike on the edge of the buildings, sat amorphous beings with no shape or human pretence. I asked the stranger about these creatures, as they somehow filled me with dread, even though they moved not at all.

3.

"These are true Eidola, known as the *Irin*. They watch the goings on inside the illusion, but that is all they do.

Some think it is their only role to remember and record existence. But for what purpose no one knows."

I asked, "If they watch and remember and record, they must report these findings. A higher power must have a motive in placing these beings amongst us."

The Stranger smiled at me patiently. "You make the mistake of superimposing motives you have gleaned from within the illusion. It is possible that that the *Irin* serve a higher purpose. It is just as likely that they exist in and of themselves. Sometimes existence itself is purpose enough."

4.

I watched them, then. I became obsessed with discerning some form from within the shadowy substance of their being. They were all so still, like badly carved gargoyles, and it was easy to look through them and past them. But when my gaze was relaxed, and my eye defocused, I could see them in their multitudes; thousands of them around the city, crouched on every wall and every roof. Silently watching the drama of human life play out before them.

And then one of them moved.

5.

It was an act of pure gracefulness; what once was as stone suddenly became animate and flowing. It swooped down amongst the people and became more human in appearance as it did so. It was clear that the throng could sense this being now; they moved around it as if it were solid and accepted it as part of the populace. But my eye

could see a difference within it still. Some aspects of its birdlike form remained; a hunch in the shoulders and a proud extension of the neck.

6.

"It's helping that woman," I said. It had grasped the hands of an old woman, kissing her on each cheek as it did so. The woman dropped her belongings, and smiled, looking at the world un-blinkered for the first time. "It helped her to see the Lie, didn't it?"

"It is no longer *Irin*," the Stranger explained. "It is now *Malachim*, a messenger who brings truth to the Gaoled."

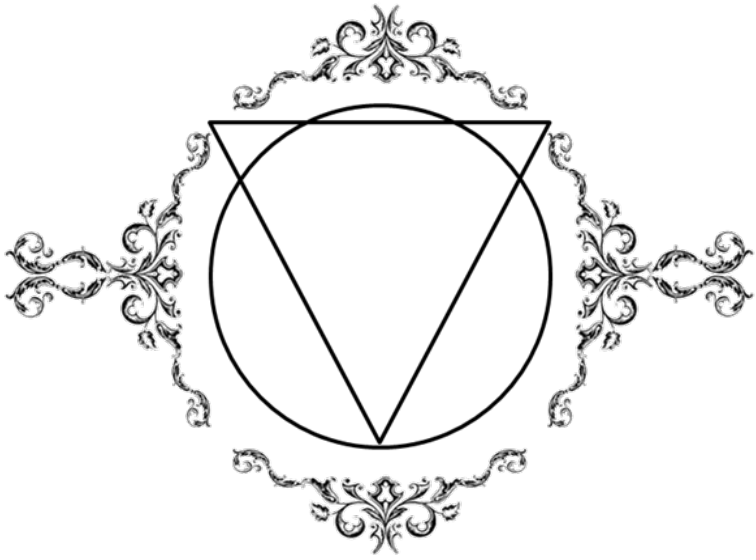
And I watched the old woman see the being more clearly. She smiled, tears running down her face. For a moment the Divine Spark within the woman was reflected in the face of the *Malachim*, setting an aura of fire about the creature's head. As it took off from the ground again, the woman mouthed the word by which we know such beings; "Angel."

7.

I asked the Stranger that which puzzled me. "Why did the Watcher become involved? None of the others have moved. What motivated it to act, to help the woman see the Truth behind the Lie that is the World?"

By way of response, the Stranger shrugged. There were no answers to my questions.

The Demon



1.

I cast about for meaning in all I had been shown. Sometimes the horror of the true nature of the World overwhelms me, and I long for the time of my ignorance. It is so much easier to be blind to the Truth that is the Lie; you can be happy in the physical world, and many argue that this is enough.

2.

A demon showed itself to me on this night. I awoke from a troubled sleep and, unable to slumber further, I rose and walked downstairs to my study. My mind was filled with images from my nightmare and I endeavoured to record that which I had seen.

3.

The flickering of the lamp caused me to look up from my work. The shadows danced in the corners of the room but

I soon realised that it was no shadow that I could see by the bookcase. As I watched with the corner of my eye, the formless shape coalesced; it was *Irin*... still and watchful, moving not at all.

4.

And then the watcher did move. It fell from its place into an hyletic form, copying the aspect of a man. I was at first shocked by his appearance. The figure before me was handsome, and resembled my dear late husband in many respects.

5.

"This night you dreamed of forgetting. You longed for the time when you knew not of the nature of the illusion. That gift is mine to give, if you would but ask." He was holding a small glass phial. The liquid within was clear and sparkled with the light from the candles in the room.

"What is that?" I asked.

"It is water from the river Lethe, collected by my hand, and mine to share with whomever I please."

6.

As it spoke I looked upon its face and saw through its bright mask to a deeper truth. I looked at this visage before me, and saw that it was my own Shadow that clouded the face of the demon, and the shape of it was terrible and hornt . I paled at what I saw, but only for a moment, as I had been schooled in the ways of the Eidola.

7.

The Stranger had prepared me for this meeting. The Shadow is born from me, and so shares my secret name. I haled the demon, naming it so, and it came, eager to do my bidding. I sent it from me, casting it backwards into the darkness. It could no longer tempt me with its ministrations, and was resigned again to the status of watcher.

8.

Forgetfulness is the opposite of Truth. The Demon will try to tempt you with a way back from the brink of seeming madness. You will yearn for the embrace of ignorance; for the comfort of familiar places. But that path leads only through immobility and into despair.

The Fullness



1.

I stood within a great stone circle. The Stranger held me by my hand, and led me around each of the watching stones in turn. They were as tall as four men, and as thick in girth as the largest tree. I held out my hand as I passed, and felt the texture of each one; the rough stone was entirely present, with a physicality that could not be ignored.

2.

"Look!" the Stranger said, pointing to the centre of the circle. There was a black iron cage containing a wide stone brazier. A fierce fire blazed within the carved confines of the metal, engulfing a sphere which was the Earth.

I looked into the fire, which in its vigour shot sparks of light into the air. They flew through the bars of the cage on the massive updraft that the fire had created.

3.

A dark figure appeared, stalking around the cage, sometimes touching the iron, sometimes reaching into the flames within. They did not burn Him. Despite the brightness of the flames, He was shrouded in a deep gloom that disguised all His features. All I could see was the man-like shape tending the caged fire.

Every now and then the figure snatched for the sparks, but they were too spry for Him.

"Who is that?" I asked.

4.

"It is the Not-God; the half-maker. Within this stone circle is the Universe which He rules. He was born here, and He knows no other."

I flinched as the God who is not God seemed to turn towards the sound of our voices.

5.

"Do not worry, for He cannot perceive us. We are as those sparks."

"See how they seek to return to the Fullness."

I did not understand the Stranger's words.

"The stones mark the edge of the physical world," the stranger explained, "and yet we can step outside their bounds.

I was led between two of the stones, then out of the circle itself. There was no barrier, no fanfare, just a single step of my own volition.

6.

"Can He follow us?" I asked, looking back at the Not-God. He was busy testing the bars of the cage as the fire within continued to light up the night.

"No." the stranger answered.

7.

We walked a little way from the stone circle. It was dark, and the hillside rippled with unseen life.

"What is out here?" I asked.

8.

"The rest of creation. The Fullness. The God of all Gods who is the Universe.

And it is our true home."

The Divine Spark



1.

Within each of us who is imprisoned is an eternal fire.

This is the human soul, but it does not belong to us.

It is borrowed, split as it was from the Fullness when the Base Physical was created.

2.

It is this part of ourselves that the Not God covets. Not being part of the Fullness of existence, He cannot perceive the nature of the spark, except to witness its being and its consequence. And in His desire for this understanding, He has imprisoned us within His Universe.

3.

His motives are mercurial.

On the one hand, He wishes to know this Spark for Himself, to claim it and have it enter Him in order to be whole. For He has seen that it is the Spark which gives us knowledge beyond our ken, and joins us all together in a vast conglomeration of life.

On the other hand, He fears the Spark, as He does not understand from whence it came. He is firm in the belief that he is the one supreme creator of all the Universe and everything in it. And yet, even though we were created by Him, we possess something that He did not create. It is a mystery to Him, and so part of Him wishes to destroy it.

4.

But He cannot quench the flame. Instead, He sets about decreasing its potency. He placed within us the desire to procreate and increase in number. And with each generation the Spark is split, and humanity becomes more separate.

5.

But the potency of the Divine Spark remains inside us all.

It is the mote in the centre of ourselves that is always with us. In the deepest darkness and most deathly silence, it is there, calling out to us to light the way.

It is the voice in the crowd that rings out clear and true and the whisper that joins us to face the night.

Recognising the Spark within ourselves is a vital step on the path of truth.

6.

The spark is a piece of the true Godhead who is the Fullness.

This is our link with the Divine, and proof that we are all part of an existence greater than ourselves, and greater than the hyletic form we find ourselves inside.

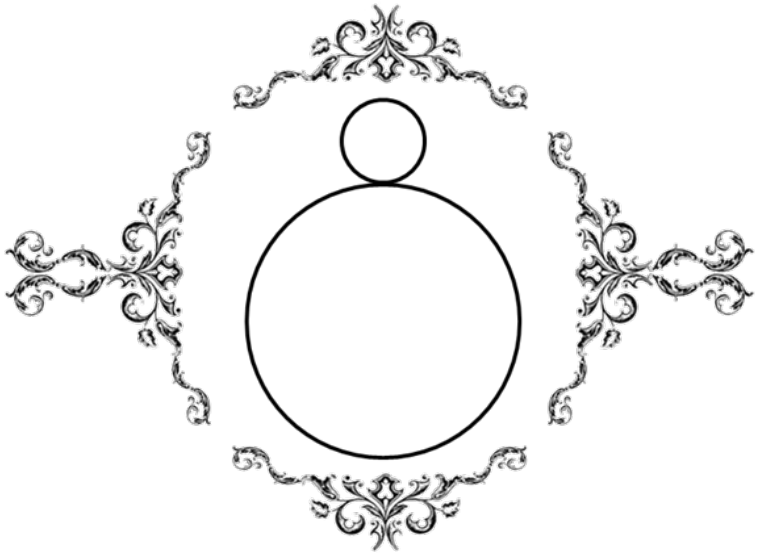
7.

We have fallen a long way from the grace of the Deity, and it is the Spark that pulls us back towards the light.

Sometimes its ministrations are subtle. We are lead down paths of coincidence and chance, only finding out at the end of the journey that we are exactly where we need to be.

Sometimes its pull is more pronounced. Woe betide those who ignore the will of the Divine Spark, as to do this is to ignore the voice of your secret self.

Wisdom



1.

And I was taken back, before the building of the Gaol, even before the conception of the God who is not God. This was a time when the Aeons explored the reaches and extents of the Universe, and honoured the Fullness as they honoured themselves.

2.

A woman sat beside a bottomless pool nestled in a grove of trees. Her name was Sophia, and she looked around at everything her father had created, and she was amazed at what she saw. But being within this surfeit of creation, she became aware that she was separate from it, and she longed to be one with her father and mother.

3.

She looked down into the pool, into depths beyond her normal sight. It was a swirling mass of chaos, and yet she

thought it would lead her to the place she could not know; the place of joining where the Universe ended and her father and mother began. With nary a glance back at her husband, who dwelt with her in the Garden, she dove into the turbulent waters, and disappeared from his sight.

4.

She set out through the chaotic waters, on a path at first. But soon she became lost. The light of the garden grew distant, and the waters filled her and weighed her down. She fell from the sight of the Universe, and despaired.

5.

And in her despair she thrashed and churned the waters. She knew that she was lost, that she had fallen so far that she could not return to the light of the Garden. That part of her had died, and in her remorse she tried to imbue the chaos with her own divine spark. But it is in the nature of Chaos to feed upon Order, and the woman was overcome by the Chaos, and became mired in its turmoil.

5.

The waves of Chaos washed over the woman. As they touched her, so had they were themselves touched by her presence, and were altered. And a life emerged from the waters, accidental and ill-formed. The woman looked upon her unfortunate child and saw the imperfection she had formed in the name of her father, and she was ashamed, naming the being *Ildabaoth.*

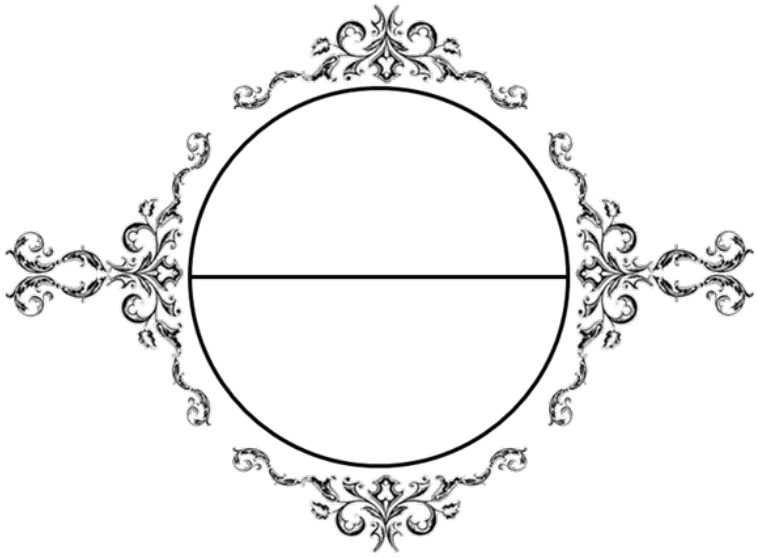
6.

And Sophia watched as her Son felt the power of creation within Him. Blindly, He divided the chaos, creating the material realm. Oblivious to the higher world, He proclaimed himself God of this world. She watched as He begat his own offspring, sending them forth to construct the Heavens and the Earth. And she watched as He stumbled around.

7.

Thus humanity was created from the Demiurge. But He was ignorant to His acts, and Sophia saw that the part of her that had passed into her Son was then passed into all of humanity. He was ignorant to this passing, but yearned for it when he saw it inside of them. This part of Sophia is inside of us all; it is the spark of the Divine which forms the very basis of our humanity, and it is our soul, which exists outside of the material world, and yearns to be reunited with the great Divine.

God who is not God



1.

Into the Chaos He was born; and out of it. Blind to the existence of his mother, whose mistaken journey created him, He found himself alone in a Universe He could not see beyond. And because of this there *was* nothing beyond. He was the only being within this no-place, and in realising this He proclaimed himself God.

2.

God-like was He, but He was a child of the Aeons, and He possessed their ability and desire to create. He divided the chaos, collected the matter, and formed the physical world. He walked amongst his creation, but found it lifeless, and through his journeying He understood what life was, and realised he could create this also.

3.

His first creations were aspects of himself. Beings who could create like Him, and out into the World He sent them to inhabit it, and to build in it, and He lived through them, yearning to experience all there was to experience. But these mirrors of Himself were as equally flawed. They shared their maker's ignorance and arrogance. They could not see beyond the border of the material world, and they could not discern the presence of the true Godhead.

4.

The God who is not God then set about creating something wholly new, and humanity was made. In the making, something of his mother passed through Him and into the new children. And so each human carries within them the Divine Spark, which is called the Soul, a fragment of the higher ones and a link to the most Holy of Holies.

5.

And God who is not God looked upon humanity, whom He created with both love and fear. They were His children, and yet they shone with an inner radiance which He did not understand. Nor did He know how He had created such a thing within them. And because He did not understand this, and because He was ignorant and unknowing and could not perceive of the higher world, He was afraid.

6.

God who is not God set His creations free to wander and populate the Earth. He watched them jealously, for they possessed something that He did not. He saw that the spark seemed to separate them from the rest of His creations. It made them see things beyond the normal scope of the material realm, and they became aware of truths that should have been unknown to them.

7.

Thusly, He caused humanity to separate and multiply. And He led them to spread out across the surface of the Earth and to grow abundant. All this was to diminish the spark that lay inside them, to makes it smaller with each passing generation.

8.

And humanity recognised they were not alone on the Earth, that s existed, more powerful than themselves, and they worshipped them as Gods.

9.

God who is not God saw them worship others, and was displeased, as He knew that He was the supreme creator of all things. He made himself known to humanity, saying "I am the one, true God. You shall worship no other Gods but me." And humanity saw that he was wrathful, and they were afraid.

10.

And humanity spread out across the face of the Earth. And even though with each generation their spark diminished, they still gleaned knowledge of the Universe that should have been unknowable. They communicated and shared these ideas, and began to challenge the omnipotence of God who is not God.

11.

And so he created death. Humanity was forced to live out a short span of years, and so limit the influence of the unseen power within them. But even in this act was God thwarted as the spark, it seemed, lived on even after death. So He trapped all the souls of humanity to be reborn into new physical shells, and so they would not escape the endless cycle of life, forgetfulness, and rebirth.

12.

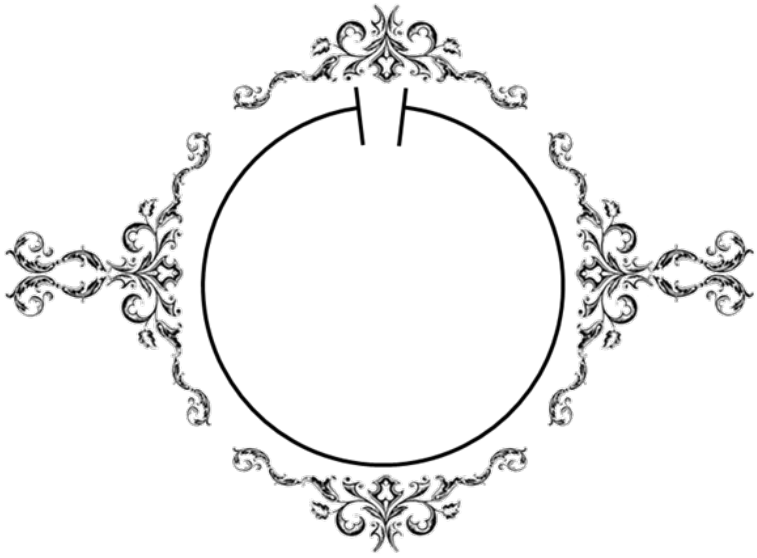
For He is the half-maker; the Demiurge. He is the creator of the Gaol that is the World, formed to keep humanity blind to truths that even He cannot see. He is the Great Architect of the circle of existence in which we find ourselves, an endless machine from which he seeks to extract the answers he cannot know. He is the Great Artificer, author of the lie that binds us and enslaves us to His will.

Do not fear Him, for He is an ignorant child.

Pity Him in His loneliness.

See Him for what He is and therefore escape His influence.

The Great Fear



1.

A wheel stood in the centre of the wasted land. It was gigantic; the height of twenty men at least. Wooden, old and rotting, and fixed in the centre with an iron axel about which the structure turned.

2.

Pinned to the wheel, at the top of every spoke, were men and women. Each had their eyes tightly closed, as if terrified of the action of the wheel. For on one side it lifted them high into the air, but this was balanced on the other by a falling. I looked to the Stranger who had appeared beside me, and she said "This is the whole of humanity."

3.

The wheel turned slowly enough, but always in one direction. And at its base the wheel straddled a river. At

the end of the cycle the bodies plunged into the water, still attached to the wheel, only to be brought out again as the circuit continued, washed clean. "This is the true Lethe," the stranger said, gesturing toward the river. And I noticed that for a moment, just as the souls emerged from the stringent waters, their eyes were open. But soon they closed in fright.

The stranger spoke again, pointing at the great and terrible wheel. "Life is a strange circle. We are born, we live, and we die only to be born again; trapped forever in the incarnate Gaol that is the World."

4.

It is in the nature of the blinded man to fear that which he cannot perceive. Thus the imprisoned human race is kept subservient to the whims of the false creator. It is fear that carries us through the whole of our lives; fear of loss; fear of failure; and even fear of ourselves. But behind all of these is the Great Fear itself; the fear of Death.

5.

Religion - that great tool of our oppressors - has used the fear of death to great effect throughout time. We are told to live good lives, finding the answers to our questions in the holy texts, and behaving in line with a prescribed set of rules. Sometimes we are even encouraged to persecute those who do not share our beliefs. And all in the name of securing a place in the afterlife.

6.

It is this fear of the great unknown that leads to heartache and indecision. But remove this fear, remove the doubt and the concept of heaven and hell, and the fear in its basal form melts away. For the truth is equally as horrifying, but it is truth.

7.

A few souls stood with us. They were still marked by the pins that had once fixed them to the wheel like all the others. But now their eyes were open. They could see the wheel in its entirety, and it nature became mechanical, predictable and without mystery.

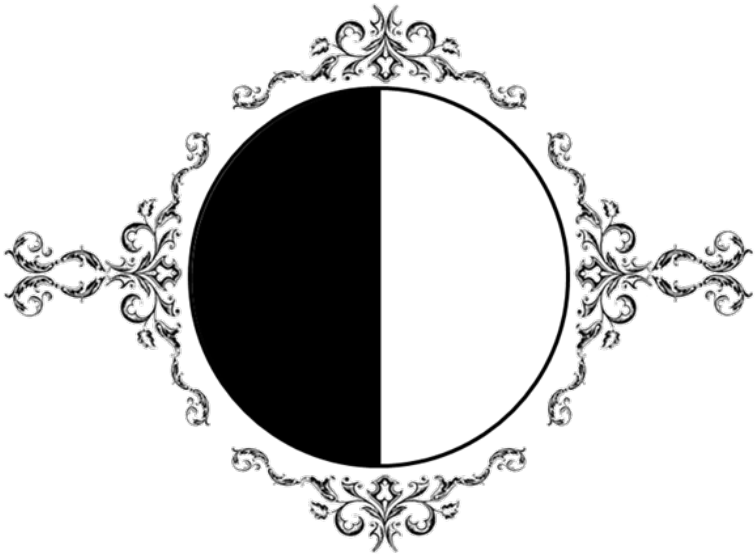
"It is just a machine," one of them said.

"From outside there is nothing to fear from it," another one added.

I asked them how they got down from the contraption. Each answered identically.

"I opened my eyes."

The Shadow



1.

The brighter the light, the more defined is your shadow. It follows you, like a lost sibling, changing with the day. Step into the darkness and it disappears. But where does it truly go?

2.

This dream was the most strange, as it appeared real to me. It was only after hours of waking that I persuaded myself it had not actually occurred. Thus is the power of the Shadow.

3.

I was sat at my dresser, brushing my hair. It was a long while before I saw that my reflection in the mirror had stopped this action. She was simply sat there staring at me. Thus, even though she was me, she was separate

from me; a dark twin that now watched me with suspicious eyes.

4.

In that moment of realisation I was more scared that I ever had been before. She was everything that I had left behind in my pursuit of the truth. She was a naive and impressionable girl, awed by the world which was shown to her. She was the remnants of a wife and a mother, devastated by loss. She was my fear and my anger, and yet she was as alive as I was. She sat there, looking at me through the glass, as if she were sizing up an enemy.

5.

"Did you not know I was here, sister?" my shadow said.

I shook my head, my mouth unable to form the words that I needed.

She giggled at my silence. "I have always been here, somewhere between your head and your heart. But I was born separately when you chose to follow the path towards your enlightenment."

6.

"When you renounced anger for acceptance, I took that anger as my own. When you replaced your selfishness with compassion and understanding, I grew from this detritus and made it a valuable part of myself."

7.

"I am the sum of those parts you have deemed to be wrong or bad or evil about yourself. And I have been created as you have been so very good at separating yourself from me."

8.

I stammered: "But you're not real?"

"Aren't I? You have always known I was there inside you. Watching and waiting, ready to spring up at any moment. Without knowing, you have been on your guard, I will give you that. But in your darkest moments you let me run wild."

9.

I stared at her for a long time. She looked like me, and yet it was as if my features had been strained through some experiential filter which caused every hurt, every pain I had ever felt to show there for all to see. Her eyes were hard and cruel, and her lips were set in a wry grin that was meant to mock me.

10.

"If you are truly me," I challenged, "then I am not scared of you. For I have been through the same occurrences as you, and where you have seen only bad, I have taken goodness from them.

And if you are truly separate from me, then I will seek to increase the distance between us. I have discarded you because I found your emotions destructive and un-useful.

I know the tenets of my path, and there is nothing you can do or say to dissuade me from them."

11.

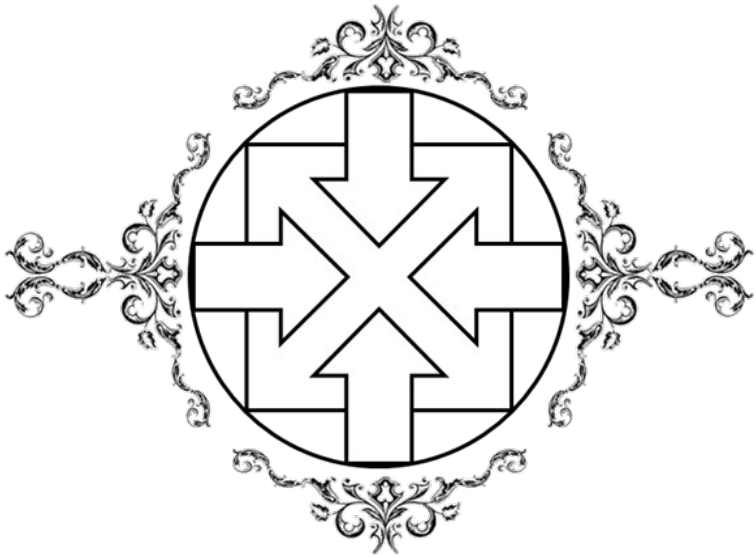
She laughed at me openly then; a full, throaty, mocking laugh that was nothing like my own. "I do not wish to stop you, sister. For without your morals and your prudishness I would surely not exist at all."

But know this; as you grow from your experiences, so do I grow from the darkness you leave behind. We are two spirits with one body, and one day we must fight for the right to exist. And on that day, one of us will surely vanish!"

12.

I awoke as she said this, but the dream was more vivid that any other I had had before. And it has disturbed me, as even though it was a dream, I know that she is here, with me now, in the waking world. Waiting for the moment when we both must battle for our own survival.

Many Paths



1.

There is a mountain, as tall as the sky. On top of the mountain is a door that leads out of the world.

2.

The people at the base of the mountain look up into the clouds that surround its peak. They do not know exactly what is hidden there, but they do know they have to climb the mountain to find out.

3.

Yet, most of them wander the foothills, lost and confused.

Some say, "The mountain is too high. There is probably nothing at the top anyway, so I will not try climbing."

Others go about their lowly business, never looking at the mountain. It is there, a constant presence

overshadowing their lives. But its immensity scares them, and they would rather pretend it does not exist.

4.

For those that look, there are paths that lead up the mountain. They rise and fall along the rocky surface, their ways sometimes smooth and sometimes hazardous.

5.

A number of roads are wide and obvious. They are maintained by the devout and the worthy, who cut steps into the steep sides of the mountain to aid those who would ascend. Signs are planted to point the way, and the most adept will act as guides and trail-hands.

6.

But these roads often dwindle, the stepped paths only going so far up the edifice. And those who would guide the lost are often limited to the altitudes they know. The well-trodden paths spiral around and around the summit, but seldom lead all the way to the top.

7.

In the end, the worthy traveller must journey on own. The door stands amongst a wilderness of rocks and undergrowth, and to find it a soul must forge a new path through these obstacles. There is no guide to the very top, and none can map out a way with metaphor and platitude. It is difficult to leave the well-lit ways of the

masses, but leave them you must if you are to stumble through the cloud to the heights of discovery.

8.

And beware the false paths!

The Eidola are busy at work around the mountain, planting false signs, and forging ways that look upward, but lead in circles.

Or they will take you blindly off the cliff, plunging you into the depths of mundanity and damnation.

One path looks like another, which is another reason to only trust to yourself, and be led by the light from within.

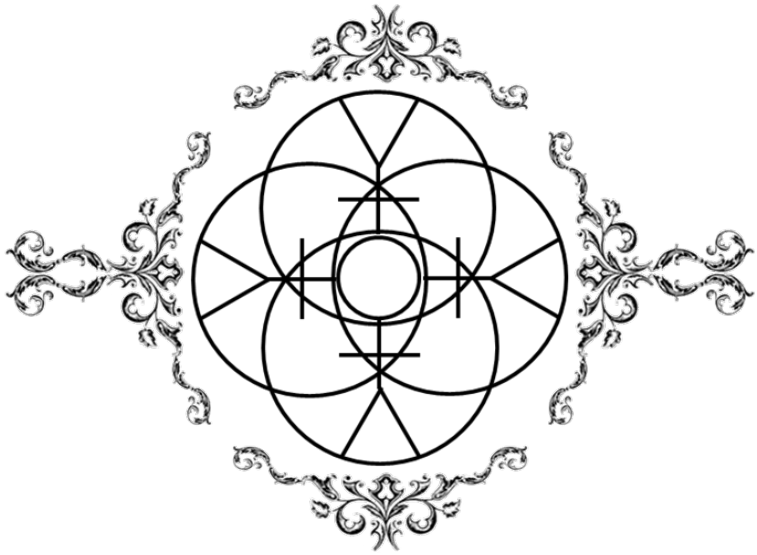
9.

And on reaching the door, the scales of the world will fall away, and the illusion will be revealed.

For this is the doorway in the wall of the Gaol that is the World.

And through it lie yet more paths, ever upward, into the Fullness of the Universe.

The Shared World



1.

I stood upon an island. Surrounding me was a vast lake, becalmed and mirrored. I felt at peace; at home. This island was my own place, and it contained all the familiar things of my life.

2.

Looking out over the still water I beheld other islands. Some were quite near, others far in the distance. Some were barely domes of sand above the water level of the lake; others were veritable mountains by comparison.

3.

Each of these islands also had an inhabitant. Just one each, a single figure amongst the detritus of their lives. And I beheld the Spark within each of them, and so I knew them to be human.

4.

I asked the stranger who these others were.

"They are people, like you."

"Why are we separated like this?" I asked, gesturing towards the great expanse of water.

"Every man lives on an island. What lies above the surface is the personal world we create for ourselves. We can not share this world with others, for in doing so we would lose our identity.

"Now jump!"

5.

Together we jumped into the water. Down we swam into the deep trench that was here. And looking about me I beheld that each of the islands that I had previously seen above the surface were the pinnacles of even greater spires that surrounded me everywhere.

Some islands were joined to others, just beneath the interface. Others swept downwards into the gloom, like giant pillars of rock. But they too must join with the other islands even that far down, as the floor is but one surface; continuous and whole.

6.

"Thusly, all of humanity is connected," the Stranger said. "They have a shared world, hidden within the depths of themselves. Its landscapes are only visible to those who leave such things as sense and self behind, and dive into the dark waters."

7.

And the nature of this Shared World became apparent to me, for it is the place born of our imagination which we think is private to us; a personal creation of our own invention. But it is not. This world is a stepping stone between the physical Gaol and the lands beyond the bounds that the Not God has set for us.

8.

It is the world where the dreams of all men converge.

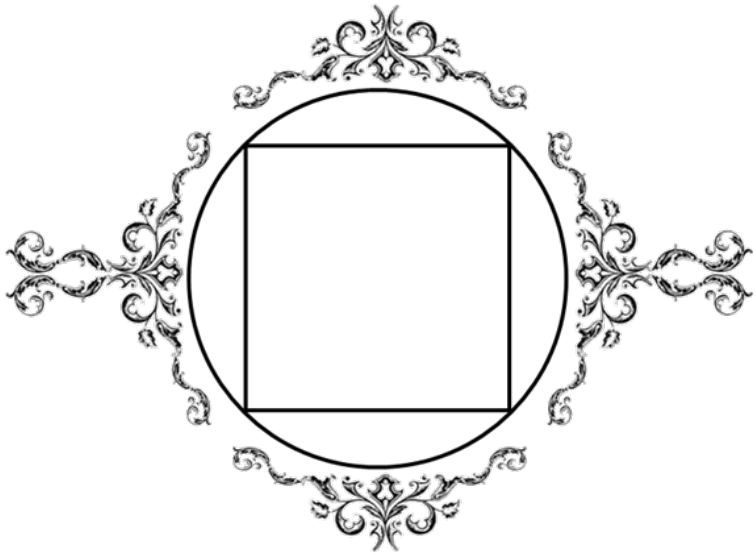
9.

Its hills are painted by artists and its forests and gardens are tended by writers.

10.

It is our own act of creation; in defiance of the Not God. Unbeknownst to ourselves we reveal our true nature; we are part of the Fullness and with that part of the Fullness that is in us we create, as all Gods create. For it is in our nature to be God.

The Wall



1.

The illusion surrounds us completely. It is everywhere. It is the strange circle that is the Gaol that is the World. It is the lie behind the truth that is the World.

2.

The walls of the Great Lie are everywhere. They are the structure of the Gaol, and are designed by the Artificers to trap us, whilst remaining hidden. The walls are subtle, but it is possible to reveal their true nature.

3.

The Great Lie is like a machine. Each part of it has a rhythm and a resonance, for it is in the nature of the Demiurge to foster patterns in his work. The hyletic parts of our own nature crave those patterns, and in this way are we trapped by the Lie. Our daily lives are ruled by the cycles of the Sun and the Moon. Even in our day-to-

day existence we crave routine and repeatability. We form habits and invent daily rituals and in this way are we trapped by the Lie.

4.

So the patterns trap us; but they can also set us free.

By studying the patterns in our lives, we can sometimes see those walls which imprison us. By breaking with the conformity of our existence we can throw off our shackles and further our enlightenment.

5.

It is the pause in the machine as it moves from one state to another that is the key. It is the moment when the direction of the mechanism changes; that infinitesimally small point at which all motion stops, before resuming in the opposite direction. This is the place in between times, and the time in between places.

To catch one of those moments, and to enter it, is to breach the Wall of our Gaol.

6.

And yet, finding such a moment rarely happens, even though these 'tween times occur regularly; in the daily movement of the Sun through the sky; in the passing of the seasons; in the Wheel of the Year; in the waxing and waning of the moon. We know these times already, for throughout the history of the World we have venerated them as 'magical' or 'thin'.

At the 'tween times the Walls of our Gaol are most easily discernible, and this is the first step along the path to enlightenment.

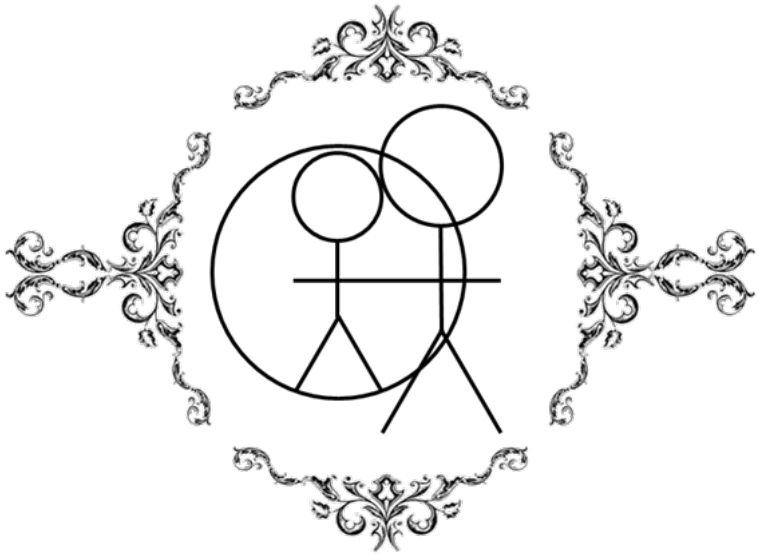
7.

'Tween places exist also. Borders and bridges, crossroads and gateways all exist as two points in the machine, and thus are vulnerable to breaching. Places of departure and arrival, both physical and spiritual are also thusly imbued. The points at which the Great Fear have been realised remain potent 'tween places.

8.

Seek out the Walls at these times and these locations. Break out of the patterns in your life, and the nature of the Walls may become apparent. Their nature may be physical, or they may be themselves corporeal. The Eidola sometimes build out of their own flesh to enslave us.

The Stranger



1.

"Who are you?" I asked the Stranger.

"I am you," she replied.

"But you know of things that I do not."

The Stranger said, "I am that part of you that can see the Wisdom that is present in the nature of all things."

2.

"And where are you?" I asked the Stranger, for even though she was apparent beside me, there was an ethereal quality about her presence.

"What you see is just a part of me, the part that exists in the Hyletic realm. I am beyond the snares of the Not God, and free of the Gaol that is the World."

3.

"But how did you become so freed?" I asked.

"I have always been so."

4.

"What then is your purpose?" I asked of the Stranger.

"To shine a light for you to see by."

5.

"And my purpose?"

"To find me again, for we were separated at your birth."

6.

And I remembered then that the Stranger had always been with me. Separate, but together, we had walked the path of my life. I had not always listened to her guidance, as sometimes her voice had been lost in the maelstrom of mundanity that is the nature of the Lie. Hers is the quiet voice, the whisper, that can only be heard once the many voices of the damned have been silenced. Hers is the steady voice, lost in the madness, that surrounds us all.

7.

Hers is the voice of the mother, Sophia, the one called Wisdom, who watches over the children of her bastard child. Secretly she calls to us, so as not to rouse the ire of her son, the Not God. She breathes life into our spirit, and seeks to rescue us from the damnation she herself caused.

8.

Hers is the voice of the father, the Christ, who is husband to Sophia. He is the ultimate guide, the one who traversed the walls of the Gaol in order to show us the means to escape and return to the Fullness of the Universe.

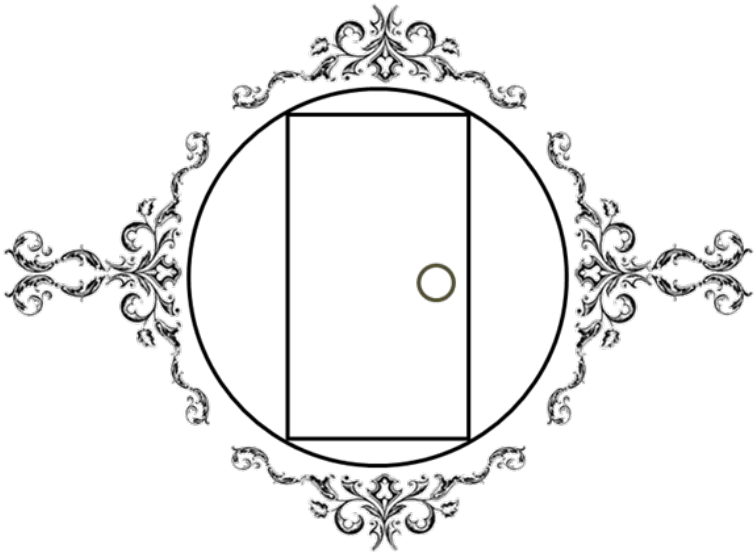
9.

So heed the Stranger when you see him. For he will appear in your time of need. And listen closely to his ministrations as their meanings are often lost in the din of your reality.

10.

And trust to his word, as he is as you were, and he is as you are now, and he is what you will become.

The Doorway



1.

And at the end of all paths lies a doorway.

2.

It is the boundary between where you are and where you are headed.

It is the ultimate 'tween place; a state of duality between being and not being. Infinitely thin, and yet powerful enough to change everything forever.

3.

It is enough for some to reach a place where they can see such a door. This journey can be harsh enough, and can take a lifetime of toil and learning.

4.

Others reach the threshold of the door, and The Great Fear takes them. It is the fear of the unknown that stays their touch on the handle. It is the fear of failure that causes them not to try. "What if the door is locked?" they ask themselves. "What if I have come all this way only to find the way closed to me at the last moment?"

5.

It is the fear of the future that belays most. To reach the door takes a lifetime of work, and gives meaning to an existence we all know to be a lie. To step through would end that struggle. There would be no more meaning, no more struggle, and no more point to existing.

6.

To the First Fear I say this:

"The whole of your life has been a discovery of what was once unknown. This is just a larger threshold, a schism in the nature of what was, and what will be. Be afraid of what is real, and not of what you cannot see."

7.

To the Second Fear I say this:

"This door is of your own making, even though it seems of strange design. So you, and only you, possess the key."

8.

To the Third Fear I say this:

"There is no end. Life is a Strange Circle. And though it would seem as though you are leaving this reality, there is another, larger circle beyond. There is always struggle, for it is this that defines the living. Be comforted in the fact that the circle spirals ever outwards, until it encompasses everything."

9.

Seek out such doorways, as they lead you onwards to better things. Finding the 'tween places will make the Lie apparent, and allow you to forge a doorway to breach it. They are there in all things. In the turning of the year. In the geography of the Earth. In the events of your life. They are there in the forefront of your thoughts, and in the dark backwaters of your mind. They are there in other people, and the Eidola flock to these sites to obscure their telling nature.

Be way-seekers and gate-forgers.

Find the hidden walls 'tween night and day, and once seen, find a way through to the other side.

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